

**ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of a Meeting of the Revenue & Resources Committee held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, Royal Wootton Bassett Rugby Club, Ballards Ash, Royal Wootton Bassett.

**PRESENT: Councillors:** Steve Bucknell, Mike Farrow, Ian Ferries, Paul Heaphy, Mike Leighfield, Marion Sweet and John Wilks.

**Also in attendance:** Councillors Audrey and Chris Wannell.

**Officers in Attendance:** Johnathan Bourne, Town Clerk, Michelle Temple, Administrative Services Manager, Kalpesh Patel, Accountant, Emily Maiden, Committee Clerk and Administrative Officer.

**24. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sue Doyle.

**25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with sections 10 and 12 of Wiltshire Council's Members Code of Conduct, as adopted by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council at a meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

**26. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman informed Members that the purchase of Merchant's House has been completed, and that a comprehensive report on the matter will be taken to the full Council meeting in December. The Town Council's

Investments Working Party will meet in the near future to discuss investment issues related to the property.

## **27. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

RESOLVED to confirm and sign minutes of meetings of the Committees held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September [R&R/3/2015-2016], copy previously circulated.

## **28. VISIT WILTSHIRE**

At a meeting of the Revenue and Resources Committee held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015, an invitation to subscribe to annual membership of Visit Wiltshire at a cost of £721 +VAT was discussed. It was resolved to enquire as to the possibility of a 50% reduction in the membership fee for one year, to allow the Council to assess the usefulness and value of the scheme.

David Andrews, Chief Executive of Visit Wiltshire, informed the Council that unfortunately a 50% discount would not be possible, however an extra £250 worth of partner benefits would be available should the Town Council wish to subscribe for 12 months. The extra benefits would include an online Royal Wootton Bassett banner advert on one of the Visit Wiltshire pages for three months, and the inclusion of Royal Wootton Bassett content in one of the Visit Wiltshire newsletters, which is circulated to 60,000 contacts.

The Committee was asked whether it wished to subscribe to Visit Wiltshire for one year at a cost of £721 +VAT, to include £250 worth of extra partner benefits.

RESOLVED not to subscribe to Visit Wiltshire on this occasion.

## **29. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

RESOLVED to note the report from the Council's Internal Auditor, in respect of internal audit work carried out on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015. Copies previously circulated.

## **30. HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY**

RESOLVED to adopt the report on a meeting of the Highways Working Party held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015, copies previously circulated.

## **31. FIRE ALARM INSTALLATION 117 HIGH STREET**

Following a meeting of the Revenue and Resources Committee held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015, it was resolved to defer the item on the installation of a fire alarm system for the Council Offices at 117 High Street until further investigation had been undertaken to answer outstanding queries. The Town Council's Health and Safety Officer, David Houlden, provided information relating to current health and safety regulations and the Offices at 117 High Street, copy previously circulated. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Section 8.1, advises employers to take 'reasonably practicable' steps to ensure the safety of those using the building. Supplementary guidance provided by the Government suggests that such steps would include fire detection and warning systems for office areas. Three quotes were sourced for the installation of the recommended system; it was also recommended that such a system be linked to the existing alarm at 117 High Street, which would incur a charge in the region of £95.

The Committee was asked to approve a quotation for the installation of a new fire alarm system.

RESOLVED to defer the item, to appear on a future Revenue and Resources agenda following the results of a visit by a Fire Safety Officer, scheduled for Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015.

## **32. ANNUAL ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

*Councillors Chris and Audrey Wannell left the meeting, 7.56pm.*

The Committee was asked to consider making recommendations to the Full Council for its budgetary position in the 2016-2017 financial year.

Copies of the complete draft budget, including figures for the Amenities Committee as well as for Revenue and Resources were previously circulated together with explanatory notes, the Fixed Assets Replacement Reserve, Projected General Reserve Analysis 2015-2016, Budgeted General Reserve Analysis 2016-2017 and proposed Precept calculation.

Members were asked to note that to avoid problems previously experienced, all recharges have been set to zero for budgetary purposes only.

Members were reminded that the draft estimates represent on-going commitments and service provision at current levels. Changes have only been incorporated where there is a clear intent by the Council to undertake change following discussion with the Chairman.

The Council has previously identified the possible need for a CATG contribution budget for minor highway works; the Committee was therefore asked to consider assigning a budget for this purpose.

The Committee was asked to consider the draft budget for the 2016-2017 year, and make recommendations accordingly.

**RESOLVED to:-**

- Assign a budget of £5,000 for CATG contributions to minor highway schemes.
- Recommend the proposed Precept calculation of £839,469 to Full Council, whereby the charge for a Band D property remains at £189.81, representing a 0% difference from the previous financial year.

**33. COMMUNICATIONS**

The Committee was asked whether it wished to issue any communications in respect of the agenda items.

RESOLVED to issue a brief communication informing the public that the Council has purchased Merchant's House.

**34. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Committee was asked that members of the public and press be requested to leave the meeting to allow discussion of the establishment, property and finance matters as it is considered the publicity would be prejudicial by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.